

Sanctuary Debate Documents

Christ in the Heavenly Sanctuary

The doctrine of Christ our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary brings us assurance and hope. It invested the lives of the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with meaning; it still is a fruitful field for our contemplation and spiritual growth.

This distinctive teaching was reaffirmed in the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs adopted by the General Conference session at Dallas in April 1980. Our continuing conviction was there expressed as follows:

"There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent."

The present paper is an elaboration of the Dallas statement. It sets forth the consensus of the Sanctuary Review Committee, which convened August 10-15, 1980, at Glacier View, Colorado. The committee sought to make a serious and frank appraisal of our historic positions, evaluating them in the light of criticisms and alternative interpretations that have been suggested. Such suggestions are beneficial in that they drive us to study, force us to clarify our understanding, and thereby lead us to sharper insights and a deeper appreciation of the truths that have shaped the Advent Movement.

Thus the doctrine of the sanctuary, which meant so much to early Adventists, shines on believers in our day. To see it more clearly is to see Christ more clearly; and this vision will revive Christian life and give power to our preaching and witness.

Although the sanctuary symbolism is prominent throughout Scripture, with Christ as High Priest being the dominant idea of the Book of Hebrews, Christian thought has given relatively little attention to this subject. In the nineteenth century, however, there was a sudden flowering of interest in Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. Our pioneers brought together the ideas of Leviticus, Daniel, Hebrews, Revelation, and other scriptures in a unique theological synthesis that combined the high-priesthood of Christ with the expectation of the end of history. Christ was not merely ministering in the sanctuary above; He had entered upon the final phase of that ministry, corresponding to the Day of Atonement of Leviticus 16.

For the earliest Seventh-day Adventists this new doctrine was "the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 423). It was the means by which these firm believers in the imminent return of Jesus could come

to terms with their unfulfilled expectations. It gave them a new sense of religious identity; it filled their lives with meaning, for it "opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great advent movement and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people." —*Ibid.* Thus they could see that although they had been mistaken, they had not been utterly deluded; they still had a mission and a message.

The belief that Christ is our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary is not a relic from our Adventist past; it illumines all other doctrines; it brings God and His salvation "near" to us in a way that gives us "full assurance" (Heb. 10:22); it shows us that God is on our side.

In heaven above there is One who "always lives to make intercession" for us (Heb. 7:25, R.S.V.). He is Jesus, our High Priest, who "in the days of his flesh" (chap. 5:7) suffered, endured the test, and died for us. He is able to "sympathize with our weaknesses" (chap. 4:15, R.S.V.) and sends forth timely help from the throne of grace (chap. 2:18; 4:16). So we may come boldly into the presence of God, knowing that we are accepted through the merits of our Mediator.

The doctrine of the sanctuary gives us a new view of ourselves. Humanity, despite its frailties and rebellion, is important to God and is loved supremely by Him. God has shown His regard for us by taking human nature upon Himself, and bearing it forever in the person of Christ, our heavenly High Priest. We are the people of the Priest, the community of God that lives to worship Him and to bring forth fruit to His glory.

This doctrine also opens a new perspective on the world. We see it as part of a cosmic struggle, the "great controversy" between good and evil. The heavenly sanctuary is the divine headquarters in this warfare; it guarantees that eventually evil will be no more, and God will be all and in all (1 Cor. 15:28). His work of judgment that issues from the sanctuary results in a redeemed people and a re-created world.

While the sanctuary theme runs throughout Scripture, it is seen most clearly in Leviticus, Daniel, Hebrews, and Revelation. These four books, which attracted the attention of the first Adventists, remain the focus of our ongoing study of the sanctuary in heaven.

In terms of emphasis, these books fall into pairs. Whereas Leviticus and Hebrews are concerned primarily with the priestly functions associated with the sanctuary, Daniel and Revelation relate the divine activity in the sanctuary to the end of the world. Thus we may say that a major thrust of the first pair is intercession, while a major thrust of the second is judgment.

The Book of Leviticus describes the various services of the Old Testament sanctuary. We read of the continual sacrifices, presented every morning and evening, for the people of Israel (Lev. 6:8-13). We read also of several types of individual offerings to express confession, thanksgiving, and consecration (chapters 1-7). And the climax of the whole system of sacrifices, the Day of Atonement, is described in detail (chapter 16).

The Book of Hebrews compares and contrasts these services with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary (chap. 9:1-10:22). It argues that by His once-for-all

death Jesus accomplished what Israel's repeated offerings could never achieve. He is the reality symbolized by the Day of Atonement sacrifices, as by all the ancient services. Although it has been suggested that these references in Hebrews show that the eschatological Day of Atonement began at the cross, Hebrews is not in fact concerned with the question of time; it concentrates rather on the all-sufficiency of Calvary. For answers to our questions regarding the timing of events in the heavenly sanctuary, we look to the books of Daniel and Revelation. In particular the "time prophecies" of Daniel 7 to 9 remain crucial for the Adventist understanding of the sanctuary. They point beyond the first advent of Christ to God's final work of judgment from the heavenly sanctuary.

The precise meaning of the Old Testament prophecies is a matter that calls for ongoing study. This investigation must seek to be true to the varied nature of the individual prophecies, to take account of the differing perspectives of the readers (in Old Testament, New Testament, and modern times), to discern the divine intent in the prophecies, and to maintain the tension between divine sovereignty and human freedom. Furthermore, this study must give due weight to the strong and widespread sense of the imminent Second Advent that we find in the New Testament (e.g., Rom. 13:11-12; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Rev. 22:20).

The writings of Ellen White also contain much material dealing with Christ in the heavenly sanctuary (e.g., *The Great Controversy*, pp. 409-432, 479-491, 582-678). They highlight the significance of the events of 1844 in the divine plan, and the final events that proceed from the throne of God. These writings, however, were not the source of our pioneers' doctrine of the sanctuary; rather, they confirmed and supplemented the ideas that the early Adventists were finding in the Bible itself. Today we recognize the same relationship: the writings of Ellen White provide confirmation of our doctrine of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary and supplement our understanding of it.

In the remainder of this paper, we offer a brief explanation of this doctrine. The Biblical material on which the doctrine is based falls into two related phases. We turn to the first of these: intercession.

The Old Testament sacrificial system was given by God. It was the way of salvation by faith for those times, educating the people of God to the dreadful character of sin and pointing forward to God's way of bringing sin to an end.

But there was no efficacy in these multiplied sacrifices as such. Sin is a moral offense, not to be resolved by the slaughter of animals. "It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4, R.S.V.). In Jesus Christ alone can sin be removed. Not only is He our High Priest, He also is our Sacrifice. He is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29, R.S.V.), the Passover Lamb sacrificed for us (1 Cor. 5:7), God's appointed One whose blood is an expiation for the sins of all humanity (Rom. 3:21-25).

In the light of Jesus Christ all the services of the Old Testament sanctuary find their true meaning. Now we know that the Hebrew sanctuary itself was but a

figure, a symbol of the true sanctuary "which is set up not by man but by the Lord" (Heb. 8:2, R.S.V.; 9:24), a far more glorious reality than our minds can comprehend (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 357). Now we know that all the Levitical priests and Aaronic high priests were but prefigurations of the One who is the great High Priest because He is in Himself both God and man (chap. 5:1-10). Now we know that the blood of animals carefully selected so as to be without blemish or spot (e.g., Lev. 1:3, 10), was a symbol of the blood of the Son of God, who would, by dying for us, purify us of sin (1 Peter 1:18-19).

This first phase of the heavenly ministry of Christ is not a passive one. As our Mediator, Jesus continually applies the benefits of His sacrifice for us. He directs the affairs of the church (Rev. 1:12-20). He sends forth the Spirit (John 16:7). He is the leader of the forces of right in the great conflict with Satan (Rev. 19:11-16). He receives the worship of heaven (chap. 5:11-14). He upholds the universe (Heb. 1:3; Rev. 3:21).

All blessings flow from the continuing efficacy of Christ's sacrifice. The Book of Hebrews highlights its two great achievements: it provides unhindered access to the presence of God, and it thoroughly removes sin.

Despite the importance of the Old Testament sanctuary, it represented limited access to God. Only those born to the priesthood could enter it (Heb. 9:1-7). But in the heavenly sanctuary Christ has opened for us the door to the very presence of God; by faith we come boldly to the throne of grace (chap. 4:14-16; also 7:19; 10:19-22; 12:18-24). Thus the privileges of every Christian are greater even than those of the high priests of the Old Testament.

There is no intermediate step in our approach to God. Hebrews stresses the fact that our great High Priest is at the very right hand of God (chap. 1:3), in "heaven itself. . . in the presence of God" (chap. 9:24). The symbolic language of the Most Holy Place, "within the veil," is used to assure us of our full, direct, and free access to God (chaps. 6:19-20; 9:24-28; 10:1-4).

And now there is no need for further offerings and sacrifices. The Old Testament sacrifices were "imperfect" — that is, incomplete, unable to make a final end of sin (chap. 9:9). The very repetition of the sacrifices signified their inadequacy (chap. 10:1-4). In contrast, God's appointed Sacrifice accomplished what the old ones could not, and thus brought them to an end (chap. 9:13-14). "Every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God" (chap. 10:11-12, R.S.V.).

So Calvary is of abiding consequence. Unlike any other event in history, it is unchanging in its power. It is eternally present, because Jesus Christ, who died for us, continues to make intercession for us in the heavenly sanctuary (chap. 7:25).

This is why the New Testament rings with confidence. With such a High Priest, with such a Sacrifice, with such intercession, we have "full assurance" (chap. 10:22). Our confidence is not in ourselves — in what we have done or what we can do — but in Him and what He has done and still does.

This assurance can never take lightly the Sacrifice that has provided it. As we by faith look to Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary — our sanctuary — and the ser-

vices He there performs, we are empowered by the Spirit to live holy lives and provide an urgent witness to the world. We know that it is a fearful thing to despise the blood that has redeemed us (chaps. 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 12:15-17).

The final phase of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is that of judgment, vindication, and cleansing. We should be clear, however, that while Christ is Judge, He is still our Intercessor. We look first at the time of the judgment and then at its nature.

The prophetic period of 2300 days (Dan. 8:14) remains a cornerstone of the Adventist understanding of the final judgment. Although this part of our doctrine of the sanctuary is the one most frequently questioned, careful study of the criticisms in the light of the Scriptures confirms its importance and validity.

Three aspects of this prophecy, especially, have been called into question: the year-day relationship; the meaning of the word translated "cleansed" (Dan. 8:14, K.J.V.) and its connection with the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16); and the context of the prophecy.

The year-day relationship can be Biblically supported, although it is not explicitly identified as a principle of prophetic interpretation. It seems obvious, however, that certain prophetic time periods are not meant to be taken literally (e.g., the short periods in Revelation 11:9, 11). Furthermore, the Old Testament provides illustrations of a year-day interchange ability in symbolism (Gen. 29:27; Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6; Dan. 9:24-27). The year-day relationship also is recognizable in the interlocking of Daniel 8 and 9. Additional support is found from parallel prophecies of the 1260 days-years in Daniel and Revelation (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 12:14; 13:5). Since the prophecy of Daniel 8 is parallel to those of chapters 2, 7, and 11-12, all of which culminate in the kingdom of God at the end of history, it is proper to expect the period represented by the 2300 days to reach to the end time (Dan. 8:17). This is made possible for us by the exegetical application of the year-day relationship.

According to many older versions of the Bible, at the end of the 2300 days the sanctuary is to be "cleansed." The Hebrew word here is *nitsdaq*, which has a broad range of possible meanings. Its basic idea is "make right," "justify," "vindicate," or "restore"; but "purify" and "cleanse" may be included within its conceptual range. In Daniel 8:14 it is evident that the word denotes the reversal of the evil caused by the power symbolized by the "little horn," and hence probably should be translated "restore." While there is, therefore, not a strong verbal link between this verse and the Day of Atonement ritual of Leviticus 16, the passages are, nevertheless, related by their parallel ideas of rectifying the sanctuary from the effects of sin.

Daniel 8 presents the contextual problem of how to relate exegetically the cleansing of the sanctuary at the end of the 2300 days with the activities of the "little horn" during the 2300 days. This wicked power casts down the place of the sanctuary (Dan. 8:11) and thus occasions the need for its restoration or purification. The "little horn," however, is on earth, whereas we understand the sanctuary to be in heaven. But a careful study of Daniel 8:9-26 points to a solution of this

difficulty. It becomes clear that heaven and earth are interrelated, so that the attacks of the "little horn" have a cosmic, as well as historical, significance. In this way, we may see how the restoration of the heavenly sanctuary corresponds to — and is a reversal of — the earthly activity of the "little horn." But while we believe that our historic interpretation of Daniel 8:14 is valid, we wish to encourage ongoing study of this important prophecy.

Our conviction that the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days in 1844 marks the beginning of a work of judgment in heaven is supported by the parallelism of Daniel 8 with Daniel 7, which explicitly describes such a work, and by the references to heavenly judgment in the Book of Revelation (chaps. 6:10; 11:18; 14:7; 20:12-13).

Thus our study reinforces our belief that we have indeed come to the time of pre-Advent judgment, which historically we have termed the "investigative judgment." We hear again God's call to proclaim the everlasting gospel around the world because "the hour of his judgment is come" (chap. 14:6-7).

The teaching of "judgment to come" has a firm base in Scripture (Eccl. 12:14; John 16:8-11; Acts 24:25; Heb. 9:27; etc.). For the believer in Jesus Christ, the doctrine of judgment is solemn but reassuring, because the judgment is God's own intervention in the course of human history to make all things right. It is the unbeliever who finds the teaching a subject of terror.

The work of divine judgment that issues from the heavenly sanctuary has two aspects: One centers in God's people on earth; the other involves the whole universe as God brings to a successful conclusion the great struggle between good and evil.

Scripture tells us that we "must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:10), and that we are to give account for even the "idle word" (Matt. 12:36). This aspect of the end-time events reveals who are God's (see *The Great Controversy*, pp. 479-491). The overarching question concerns the decision we have made with respect to Jesus, the Saviour of the

world. To have accepted His death on our behalf is to have passed already from death to life, from condemnation to salvation; to have rejected Him is to be self-condemned (John 3:17-18). So this end-time judgment at the close of the 2300-day period reveals our relationship to Christ, disclosed in the totality of our decisions. It indicates the outworking of grace in our lives as we have responded to His gift of salvation; it shows that we belong to Him.

The work of judging the saints is part of the final eradication of sin from the universe (Jer. 31:34; Dan 12:1; Rev. 3:5; 21:27). At the close of probation, just before the final events in the history of our earth, the people of God will be confirmed in righteousness (Rev. 22:11). The divine activity from the heavenly sanctuary (chap. 15:1-8) will issue in the sequence of events that at length will purge the universe of all sin and Satan, its originator.

For the child of God, knowledge of Christ's intercession in the judgment brings assurance, not anxiety. He knows that One stands in his behalf, and that the work of judgment is in the hands of his Intercessor (John 5:22-27). In the righteousness of Christ the Christian is secure in the judgment (Rom. 8:1). Moreover, the judgment heralds the hour of transition from faith to sight, from earthly care and frustration to eternal joy and fulfillment in the presence of God.

God's judgment, however, is concerned with more than our personal salvation; it is cosmic in scope. It unmarks evil and all evil systems. It exposes hypocrisy and deceit. It restores the rule of right to the universe. Its final word is a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:13), one pure song of love from Creation to creation (*Ibid.*, pp. 662-678).

And in this act of divine judgment, God Himself is shown to be absolutely just. The universal response to His final acts from the heavenly sanctuary is, "Great and wonderful are thy deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, O King of the ages!" (Rev. 15:3, R.S.V.).

The Role of the Ellen G. White Writings in Doctrinal Matters

The Seventh-day Adventist Church from its beginning has recognized the existence of the gifts of the Spirit as promised by our Lord for building up the body of Christ. Among these is the gift of prophecy (Eph. 4:10-13). The following statement on the gift of prophecy was adopted at the General Conference session in April, 1980, as part of the Statement of Fundamental Beliefs:

"One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church

and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth and provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested."

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are divinely inspired. This canon of Scripture is the standard of faith and practice. Ellen G. White was inspired in the same sense as were the Bible prophets, but her

ministry and writings were given to exalt the Bible. Ellen G. White's writings, by her own testimony, were not intended to give new doctrine, but to direct minds to the truths already revealed in Scripture (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 663-665; *Early Writings*, p. 78).

While the fundamental doctrines of the church are structured on the authority of Biblical writers, expanded understanding and insight toward their full development may be found in Ellen G. White's writings. These writings also confirm Biblical truth, without in the least intending to inhibit serious research built upon sound principles of interpretation.

Recognizing that the operation of the Holy Spirit in the life and writings of Ellen G. White over a period of approximately 70 years resulted in a growth of her understanding of the Bible and God's activities in behalf of humanity, we believe that her authority

transcends that of all noninspired interpreters.

We see need for a careful exposition of the Ellen G. White writings. Not all her uses of Scripture were designed to provide a strict exposition of the Biblical text. At times she employs Scripture homiletically. At other times she looses passages from their Biblical context for special applications. Again, she may use Biblical language merely for literary style. Ellen G. White's total context and situation in life, with attention to time and place, must always be taken into consideration.

We affirm that the Ellen G. White writings are significant for our day as underscored by her statement "Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last." — *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 55.

The Ten-Point Critique

After study of Dr. Desmond Ford's document "Daniel 8:14, the Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment," the following preliminary report regarding the validity of some of the author's views is submitted:

First, we express appreciation to Dr. Ford for his many years of diligent service for the church. We recognize his talents as a teacher and preacher. His ministry has stimulated the minds of thousands of students and believers. His wealth of knowledge and personal life-style have been the source of blessing for many.

We gratefully acknowledge the author's deep concern that our presentation of the sanctuary doctrine be done in such a manner as to "recommend it to the best minds of non-Adventists, as well as our own people, and be able to survive the most searching scrutiny" (p. 5).

We further acknowledge that his manuscript has encouraged a deeper and more careful examination of the Biblical foundation for our traditional view of the sanctuary doctrine. However, while we have gladly and with good intention stated some of the positive aspects of the author's ministry, we must in fairness state that some of his activities have been neither a source of strength nor in the best interests of our church.

We feel it necessary to state that we cannot agree with certain views set forth in his document, which we regard as major aspects of his theological position on the sanctuary doctrine. These disagreements are as follows:

1) *Methodology*. We recognize the enormous amount of time and energy the author has invested in his document, which with appendixes constitutes a sizable work of nearly 1,000 pages. However, because of the size of the manuscript, with its numerous footnotes and references, which will be impressive if not coercive to many readers, we feel it imperative to make a statement on its accuracy.

After a preliminary examination of the author's use of references and sources, we find that in various instances they have either been taken out of context or used indiscriminately and thus not in harmony with the quoted writers' original intent. This is true of both secular and Spirit of Prophecy statements.

2) *The Day of Atonement in the Book of Hebrews*. In his position paper, Dr. Ford asserts emphatically that the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches that the risen Christ, by virtue of His own blood or sacrificial death, entered into the heavenly Most Holy Place at His ascension (pp. 187, 195). The cleansing of "the heavenly things" mentioned in Hebrews 9:23, he also believes, applies only to the initial New Testament period (pp. 169, 191).

The Day of Atonement sacrifice, as well as the other Levitical sacrifices and the high priest's entrance into the Most Holy Place, finds fulfillment, according to Ford, in Christ's death and ascension into the presence of God (p. 253). Christ, then, as the high priest at God's right hand, has opened up a new access and center of worship for the people of God (p. 244).

Ford declares that he can find in Hebrews no allusion to Daniel (p. 169) or any reference to a two-phased ministry of the risen Christ (p. 163). He does

affirm, however, the reality of the heavenly sanctuary (p. 240).

There is basic agreement that Christ at His ascension entered into the very presence of God, as symbolized by the earthly high priest's entrance on the Day of Atonement. There is also general acceptance that neither Daniel nor a two-phased ministry are referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews. But we do deny that His entrance into the presence of God precludes (1) a first-apartment phase of ministry or (2) marks the beginning of the second phase of His ministry.

Ford believes that the heavenly sanctuary intercession of Christ finds a providential crisis in what he understands to be the rediscovery of the gospel through a new appreciation of sanctuary symbolism (p. 260). This rediscovery he relates to the 1844 movement and the visions of Ellen G. White (p. 260). However, Ford denies that Christ's heavenly ministry climaxes in the initiation of a judgment-intercession, beginning in 1844 (pp. 595, 261).

Ford does believe that the Day of Atonement imagery finds fulfillment in judgment — even pre-Advent judgment — in the book of Revelation (pp. 449, 650). This latter, however, is a declaration at the close of Christ's heavenly intercession just before the Second Advent; it is not a heavenly judicial process beginning in 1844 (p. 595). The proclamation that providentially began in 1844 refers, in Ford's opinion, only to the believer's present decision of faith and the future pre-Advent judgment, but not to a present judicial process in heaven (pp. 652, 260-261).

This is an unwarranted reduction of Adventist belief.

3) *The Phrase "Within the Veil" as Found in Hebrews 6:19, 20.* We acknowledge the insights in Dr. Ford's study of the letter to the Hebrews; however, we disagree with the theological implications he draws from the phrase "within the veil."

We do not believe that the phrase was intended to mean that from the time of His ascension Christ has been engaged in a ministry equivalent to that which the Old Testament high priest performed once a year in the second apartment of the tabernacle on the Day of Atonement, to the exclusion of the daily phase of the priestly ministry. "Within the veil," we believe, was intended to convey the conviction that, since Christ's ascension, we have full, free, and direct access to the very presence of God.

The Old Testament believer had limited access to that presence by means of the high priest, who entered with fear and with limited effectiveness the Most Holy Place of the earthly tabernacle once a year. Since our Lord's ascension the believer has had full and free access to the presence of God through Christ. Through His sacrifice on the cross He has opened a new way to the presence of God so that we have continual and confident access to Him.

"Within the veil" refers to this symbolic picture of the presence of God in a first-century application of the Day of Atonement imagery rather than the antitypical fulfillment of the Old Testament type. This way of speaking in no way precludes our understanding of Christ's two-phased mediatorial ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, which the letter to the Hebrews neither teaches nor denies.

4) *Year-Day Principle.* While Dr. Ford professes a

belief in the year-day principle as a useful tool of Biblical interpretation, we regret that he does not see fit to apply the principle to the time prophecies of Daniel. He operates with the presupposition that all Old Testament prophecies were to be fulfilled by the first century A.D., which prevents him from using the year-day principle.

Dr. Ford believes that the year-day tool became a providential discovery "after the Advent hope of the early church had faded away" (p. 294). But coupled with his uncertainty regarding the use of the year-day principle is his uncertainty regarding the dates for the beginning and ending of the time prophecies in Daniel (pp. 320, 321, 344).

Because Ford believes that the year-day principle was not God's original intent for Daniel's time prophecies, he believes its present use, in harmony with God's "providential" arrangement, should not be with punctiliar precision.

We believe, however, that the year-day principle is a valid hermeneutical tool and called for by the context containing the time prophecies. When the context relates to historical narrative with literal people, literal time periods are used in Daniel 1, 3, 5, and 6. In the apocalyptic passages, when time periods accompany symbolic figures, it is natural and appropriate to expect those time periods also to be symbolic in nature. Numerous other reasons help the prophetic interpreter to distinguish between literal and symbolic time.

We further believe that all of the apocalyptic prophecies in which time elements are found have stood the pragmatic test. That is, their predicted events did occur at the intervals expected, according to the application of the year-day principle.

In reference to Daniel 8:13, 14, we believe that the context requires the use of the year-day principle, and thus a fulfillment beginning in 457 B.C. and ending in A.D. 1844.

We thus reject Dr. Ford's assertion that Daniel 8:14 "applies also to every revival of true religion where the elements of the kingdom of God, mirrored in the sanctuary by the stone tablets and the mercy seat, are proclaimed afresh, as at 1844" (p. 356).

5) *Apotelesmatic Principle.* Dr. Ford uses the apotelesmatic principle to affirm that "a prophecy fulfilled, or fulfilled in part, or unfulfilled at the appointed time, may have a later or recurring, or consummated fulfillment" (p. 485).

In short, by his usage of this hermeneutical principle, Dr. Ford is able to accept multiple reinterpretations and applications of prophetic symbols and statements. Almost a corollary to this principle is the author's borrowed axiom: "All are right in what they affirm and wrong in what they deny" (p. 505).

We reject the use of this axiom, whether explicit or implied, because with its use no positively stated assertion could ever contradict another positively stated assertion. With this guiding axiom coupled with the apotelesmatic principle, the author says that all prophetic interpretations by all four prophetic schools — preterists, historicists, futurists, and idealists — are correct (*ibid.*).

When he applies the apotelesmatic principle to Daniel 8:13, 14, we discover that the original meaning or purpose of these verses should have been fulfilled sometime after the postexilic restoration. If the Jewish nation had been faithful in proclaiming the gospel, and

thus preparing the world for the Messiah, "that Messiah would have been confronted at His coming by the eschatological tyrant Antichrist ('little horn'). Antichrist would have been successful in his initial warfare against God's people and truth for 2300 days, but then Christ would have brought him to his end, with none to help him. Having broken Antichrist 'without hand,' the kingdom of the Rock of Ages would have become God's holy mountain filling the whole earth for eternity" (p. 485).

In this brief scenario, Dr. Ford has interpreted, by means of the apotelesmatic principle, Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, and 11. He could do it only by denying the year-day principle and the historicist method of interpretation.

However, though Israel was not faithful, the "main idea" of Daniel's prophecies would yet be fulfilled "in principle" in later events (*ibid.*). Thus, the "little horn," for example, would be fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes, in pagan Rome, in papal Rome, and in Satan's manifestation just before and after the millennium. Each of these entities would experience judgment and be destroyed with none to help them, thus "fulfilling" "in principle" the intent of Daniel's prophecies. "These successive judgments were predicted by 'then shall the sanctuary be justified.' Every era of revival of the truths symbolized in the sanctuary may claim to be a fulfillment of Daniel 8:14" (p. 486).

Although we recognize the possibility of more than one fulfillment (when the context requires it or when a later inspired writer makes the application), we must reject Ford's usage of the apotelesmatic principle, because it lacks external control. Any principle of interpretation that permits any prophecy to mean many things is not a helpful tool.

6) *Use of Sadaq in Daniel 8:14.* The niphal use of the root *sadaq* in Daniel 8:14 is unique in the Old Testament. Though the basic meaning of the root *sadaq* is "to be right," "to justify," "to restore," the semantic range of this root includes the meaning "to cleanse." This is evident from (1) the use of *sadaq* with *taher* ("to cleanse," "to purify"; e.g., in Job 4:17) in synonymous parallelism and *zakah* ("to cleanse," "to purify"; e.g., in Job 15:14), (2) the translation of *sadaq* in several versions, and (3) the hithpael use of the root *sadaq* (the hithpael, like the niphal, is passive or reflexive) in Genesis 44:16.

Though Ford, in a number of places in his document, allows for the translation of *sadaq* in Daniel 8:14 as "to cleanse" (p. 348), he also remarks categorically in his listing of the church's assumptions for its interpretation of the sanctuary: "That 'cleansed' is an accurate translation in Daniel 8:14. (*Though this is certainly not the case!*)" (p. 290, italics ours).

While we agree with Ford that there does not appear to be an explicit verbal link between *sadaq* of Daniel 8:14 and Leviticus 16, it seems that he does not give due weight to the meaning "to cleanse" (which we consider justifiable in the context of Daniel 8:9-14) and the possibility of a relationship with Leviticus 16, particularly in the light of the common ideas between the two passages.

7) *The Relationship of Daniel 7, 8, and 9.* Dr. Ford claims that Daniel 9:24-27 (the 70-week prophecy) parallels Daniel 8:14 (the 2300-day prophecy) rather than being a segment of the 2300-day prophecy (p. 403). He further suggests that both chapters 9:24-27

and 8:14 parallel Daniel 7:9-14 (court scene in heaven) (pp. 368-376).

While the apocalyptic time prophecy of Daniel 8 basically parallels that of Daniel 7 (as well as Daniel 2), it also amplifies Daniel 7 considerably. The prophecies of Daniel 2, 7, and 8 began with either Babylon or Persia and take the reader to the end of human history (the eschaton).

However, we do not find the argument valid that Daniel 9:24-27 parallels both Daniel 7 and Daniel 8:14, since the time and subject matter of these passages differ.

8) *Antiochus Epiphanes.* Regarding the little horn of Daniel 8 and its parallelism in Daniel 11, Dr. Ford holds that "only Antiochus Epiphanes fulfilled the chief specifications of Daniel 8's little horn, and the vile person of Daniel 11. All other fulfillments, such as pagan and papal Rome, are fulfillments in principle rather than in detail" (p. 469).

As far as Rome is concerned, he affirms that "all attempts to make Rome the first and major fulfillment of all the specifications of the little horn ignore both the symbolism and the interpretation" (p. 383, italics his). On the contrary, we believe that while Antiochus Epiphanes bears some resemblance to the description of the little horn, pagan and papal Rome fulfill the specifications of this prophetic symbol.

9) *Saints in Judgment.* In the context of a discussion of the judgment of Daniel 7, Dr. Ford's claim that "the Son of Man judges the little horn and delivers the beast to the flames" (p. 365), his stress on the judgment of the little horn, and his contention that in Daniel 7 "unbelievers, not believers, are the 'eye' of that storm (i.e., the judgment)" (p. 369) are all dubious.

Nowhere in Daniel 7 does the "Son of Man" judge either the little horn or the beast. While it is true that the little horn power, which receives punishment as its reward, is judged indirectly in Daniel 7, it also is clear that God's people, who receive the eternal kingdom after the judgment has sat, are all judged worthy of the ultimate covenant blessings. Both the apocalyptic sections of Daniel (chaps. 7:21, 22 and 12:1-3) and the historical chapters depict God's people on trial (e.g., chapter 1, where the Hebrew worthies are on trial; chapter 3, where Daniel's friends are tested; chapter 6, where Daniel is tried). The judgment reveals those who have retained their intimate covenantal relationship with God. The motif of the judgment of God's people is further supported in numerous instances within classical prophecy.

10) *The Role of Ellen White in Doctrinal Understanding.* One cannot be a Seventh-day Adventist very long and not recognize that our theology is shaped to a significant degree by the ministry of Ellen G. White. Her philosophy of history as reflected in her "great controversy theme" and her concern for the development of the whole person are but two examples of insights she has provided that have helped to illuminate the Scriptures and to foster serious Bible study within the church.

This means that Seventh-day Adventists recognize in Ellen G. White an authority in doctrine and life that is second only to that of the Scriptures. She was not, nor ever pretended to be, an expert in biblical languages or in other technical disciplines related to biblical interpretation of the Holy Spirit. Yet as her understanding grew under the inspiration of the Holy

Spirit, she provided counsel for the church that has helped it to confirm light found in the Word of God and to avoid doctrinal errors that threatened its very existence. The Seventh-day Adventist Church holds the writings of Ellen G. White in the highest regard as a source of doctrinal understanding.

For these reasons we believe that some of Dr. Ford's statements regarding Ellen G. White's ministry to the church in doctrinal areas will be misunderstood. Some Adventists have inferred that in Dr. Ford's view Ellen White's authority does not extend to doctrinal issues. On this point the Seventh-day Adventist position is that a prophet's authority cannot justifiably be limited in this way.

This doctrine of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary,

this unique teaching of Seventh-day Adventists, invites earnest study on the part of every believer. Our pioneers found it by diligent searching of the Word and became motivated by it. We too must find it for ourselves and make it our own. We must come to realize that "the sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men," and that His ministry there "is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross" (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 488, 489).

As we seek to know and understand Christ in the heavenly sanctuary as fervently as did the first Adventists, we shall experience the revival and reform, the assurance and hope, that come with a clearer view of our great High Priest.

Papers Prepared for Sanctuary Review Committee

The following papers were either sent out to the delegates in advance or distributed at Glacier View (indicated by asterisk).

Cottrell, Raymond F. "A Hermeneutic for Daniel 8:14" — a comparison of the proof text method and the historical method, applying both methods to Daniel 8:14; the nature of the problems of interpreting Daniel 8:14; the distinction between symbols and the ultimate reality they represent.

Cottrell, Raymond F. "Report of a Poll of Adventist Bible Scholars Concerning Daniel 8:14 and Hebrews 9"* — a poll taken in May 1980 consisting of 72 questions and 189 possible responses; includes summary of responses to a similar poll conducted in 1958, from which grew the former Committee on Problems in the Book of Daniel.

Damsteegt, P. Gerard. "Relationship of the Ellen G. White Writings to the Bible on the Sanctuary Issue" — Ellen White's principles of interpretation related to the sanctuary doctrine; "Father Miller's" hermeneutic compared to Ellen White's; Ellen White's use of the Bible text concerning the sanctuary.

Ellen G. White Estate. "The Integrity of the Sanctuary Truth"* — a compilation of Ellen White statements concerning Ballenger's teachings. Manuscript release No. 760.

Farag, Wadie. "Source Material on *shabu'im*, 'sevens' or 'weeks' "* — xerox copies of relevant material from Bible dictionaries, the Talmud, the Bible, and Ellen White concerning the time element in the prophecies of Daniel.

Ford, Desmond. "Daniel 8:14, the Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment" — for a summary of this manuscript, see pp. 30-36.

Guy, Fritz. "The Ministry of Christ as High Priest in Heaven: Some Suggestions Toward a Theology of the Sanctuary" — for a version of this manuscript, see pp. 44-53.

Holoviak, Bert. "Pioneers, Pantheists, and Progressives: A. F. Ballenger and the Divergent Paths to the Sanctuary" — examines contemporary sources, tracing the history and interrelationships of the Ballenger case from 1898 to 1911; the relationship of the Ballenger controversy to the 1888 message and the "daily" debate.

Hasel, Gerhard F. "Blood Sacrifice: Cleansing and Defilement by Blood" — an exegetical analysis of relevant Old Testament passages, arguing that the sanctuary was defiled by accumulated sins and cleansed on the day of atonement.

Jorgensen, Alfred S. "The Fletcher Case: A Report of the Salient Teachings of W. W. Fletcher and the Administrative Actions Taken by the Australasian Union Conference in Dealing with Him" — a brief biographical sketch and analysis of Fletcher's position; extensive documentation.

Neall, Beatrice. "An Attempt to Harmonize Daniel with Leviticus on the Cleansing of the Sanctuary" — distinguishes between internal and external defilement, between defilement by the sins of Israel and by Israel's enemies; the cosmic setting of the cleansing of the sanctuary.

Neall, Beatrice. "The Contextual Problem of Daniel 8:14: 'The Transgression that Makes Desolate' " —

argues that the "transgression of desolation" refers to Israelite apostasy connected with the "abomination of desolation," or an apostate form of worship imposed by the little horn; thus the cleansing of Daniel 8:14 includes the sins of God's people.

Olson, Robert W. "A Historical Survey of Seventh-day Adventist Statements on the Doctrine of the Cleansing of the Heavenly Sanctuary" — compilation of relevant passages from Adventist publications, arranged chronologically.

Salom, A. P. "Exegesis of Selected Passages of Hebrews 8 and 9" — excellent, detailed exegesis of relevant passages.

Shea, William H. "Daniel and the Judgment" — for a version of this manuscript, see pp. 37-43.

Strand, Kenneth A. "Apocalyptic Prophecy: A Brief Introduction to Its Nature and Interpretation" — basic characteristics of apocalyptic, with specific application to Daniel's apocalyptic prophecies and the apocalyptic message of Revelation.

Desmond Ford Correspondence

Parmenter Sets Conditions

August 15, 1980

Dear Des, It gives me no pleasure to address this letter to you. In fact I am deeply grieved to think that you as a personal friend of mine over many years should find yourself in your present position. I do have a responsibility, however, which I'm sure you recognize, to place certain matters before you, so that I can convey your response to the Avondale Board and Division Committee.

Since your lecture to the Forum at PUC in October 1979, in which it was considered you took issue with certain fundamental beliefs of the church, you have been given more than six months to prepare a carefully documented statement of your present doctrinal position. This manuscript in which you deal with vital areas of the sanctuary truth, the role of Ellen White, and related areas has now been completed. You, of course, are aware that a specially appointed committee of 120 people representing Bible scholars, educators, pastors, administrators and representatives from the world church met at Glacier View Camp in Colorado August 10-15, 1980, to study and evaluate your doctrinal position as revealed in the above document. At this meeting you were given opportunity to make statements and respond to questions.

You are now aware that the above committee has reached a consensus expressing confidence in the "Fundamental Beliefs" held by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, believing that they can be adequately supported by the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The same committee, however, finds your manuscript presenting several positions that are at variance with the presently held fundamental doctrines of the church. It would seem to us that you are still challenging the pillars of our faith particularly in the area of the doctrine of the sanctuary and the role of the Spirit of Prophecy.

Our real concern now is to know whether you feel

you could be in error in some of these problem areas, and whether you are willing to yield to the judgment and counsel of your brethren and hold in suspense your particular views which are at variance with the established "Fundamental Beliefs" of the church as indicated in the attached document. What we really need to know, Des, is there any shift in your position? Are you willing to state clearly and precisely in written form:

1. That you are willing to acknowledge that there are several points in your present position on the doctrine of the sanctuary and related areas and the role of Ellen White that are out of harmony with the "Fundamental Beliefs" of the church — as indicated in the attached paper — and that in counsel with your brethren you are prepared to suspend these views in harmony with Spirit of Prophecy counsel and make a public statement to this effect?

2. That from henceforth your teaching and preaching will be in harmony with the "Fundamental Beliefs" of the church as voted in session at Dallas in April, 1980?

3. That because your special views on the sanctuary doctrine and related areas are so widely known you will indicate your willingness to acknowledge publicly that your PUC lecture and recent manuscript do present some areas of doctrine that are out of harmony with the pillars of our faith, and these will be held in abeyance and not discussed unless at some time in the future they might be found compatible with the positions and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

4. That you are prepared to cooperate with the church by pen, voice, and influence to restore confidence in the "Fundamental Beliefs" of the church with a desire to restore unity in Christ and His church? That to this end you will endeavor as a minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to do what you can to

protect the fundamental beliefs of the church from internal and external attack and develop an atmosphere of unity, of faith, doctrine, and practice?

Des, I know you are a man of integrity. There is no desire on my part to force or coerce you to go against your conscience. I believe in religious freedom. However, while you are being supported by the title of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we do not believe it is too much to ask for an indication from you that you will henceforth uphold and teach, preach, and write in harmony with the fundamental beliefs which represent the pillars of our faith.

Our great desire is to see you preserved for the ministry. But for us to help you, there must be some cooperation on your part. We earnestly pray that you will be able in all good conscience to find it in your heart to respond to this letter positively. We await your reply with real concern for you, and deep love as your friend and brother in Christ.

Yours very sincerely,
K. S. Parmenter, *President*
Australasian Division

Ford's First Reply

August 26, 1980

Dear Brother Parmenter, I deeply appreciate your letter of August 15 and the graciousness with which it softens certain conditions verbally expressed by you on August 15. In harmony with that spirit I wish to do all I can in good conscience to support the church I love and for which I have labored these thirty years.

I sincerely regret the sorrow I have brought to many by acceding to the request of my fellow teachers at PUC in speaking on the topic of their choice in their Forum of October 27, 1979. I realize that both that address and my sanctuary manuscript conflict with our "Fundamental Beliefs" statement on Daniel 8:14 as commonly understood.

May I state clearly, however, that I am now, and always have been, in the fullest harmony with the main doctrinal positions of our church set forth in the "Statement of Fundamental Beliefs" as voted in Dallas in April this year. The differences to which you refer relate to accepted sanctuary views in contrast with my sanctuary manuscript and October 27 presentation. Here, indeed, there is a clear divergence of understanding.

I appreciate more than words can express the tremendous effort the church has made to establish a unity in our understanding of the sanctuary message entrusted to us by God. The Glacier View meetings were marked by earnestness and sweet Christian fellowship. I am greatly encouraged by the consensus statement, "Christ in the Heavenly Sanctuary," and the honest, frank acknowledgments it makes. In harmony with its essence, as I understand it, I can gladly teach and preach such to the same extent as the majority of my fellow teachers present at Glacier View.

I take this opportunity to declare that I have pledged myself to seek and to foster, to defend and to preserve that unity in the church for which Christ prayed so earnestly. As I have always sought to recognize the human weaknesses to which I, with all others, am subject, I admit that in the solutions I have offered to our sanctuary problems I could be wrong. I therefore accept the counsel of my brethren and God's messenger (to which counsel I earnestly wish to respond positively) to keep to myself the views that have brought perplexity. As the brethren continue to study, I will refrain from teaching and preaching on the sanctuary in any area that might bring confusion and misunderstanding.

I have confidence in the leadership of the church and wish to give my brethren loyal and intelligent support. I greatly appreciate the spirit of openness so manifest at Glacier View and our resolve to continue the study so well begun there. I love this church and wish to see it fulfill the great purpose for which a divine providence brought it into existence.

If this letter is used in a public way it should be used in full, or not at all, in order to make two points clear to all. First, I am set for the defense of the body of Christ, and I am willing to do all I can to support it in good conscience and to refrain from causing it any hurt whatsoever. Secondly, I cannot compromise in my understanding of the doctrinal issues. Inasmuch as the *Adventist Review* has now published to the church and the world acknowledgments of the accuracy of certain key points of my sanctuary MS (see postscript), to withdraw such would be to repudiate the consensus statement and bring confusion confounded. May the Lord bless and guide us as we strive unitedly for the blessing of His people.

With warmest personal regards,
Sincerely your brother in Christ,
Desmond Ford

P.S. The key points referred to from above, which for the first time have now appeared in our own press, include the following:

1. It is the little horn, and not the sins of the saints, which defiles the sanctuary.
2. The cleansing of Daniel 8:14 has to do with restoring the damage done not by the saints but by the little horn.
3. The meaning of the key verb in Daniel 8:14 is not basically "cleanse," but justify, vindicate, restore.
4. There is no obvious verbal link between Daniel 8 and Leviticus 16.
5. The year-day principle is not explicit in Scripture.
6. Hebrews 9 does draw on the Day of Atonement to illustrate that which Christ did by His sacrifice.
7. "Within the veil" applies to the second veil, not the first, and points to access to the Most Holy Place.
8. Hebrews does not teach a two-apartment ministry (or two phases).
9. Christ, not the Father, is the great Judge in the final judgment.
10. We should not speak of our Lord's heavenly ministry in terms of apartments.
11. The N.T. viewed the second advent as imminent in its day.
12. Sacrificial blood purifies rather than defiles.

Ford's Second Reply

September 1, 1980

Dear Brother Parmenter, There were two items to which I should have made reference in last week's letter — one, my relationship to the Spirit of Prophecy, and the other — supposed collusion with those critical of the church.

I believe that E. G. White was entrusted with the gift of prophecy, a special messenger to this people. My sanctuary MS 602-641 summarizes this conviction. See particularly from 631 onwards, which is a polemic against those who wish to reject E. G. White. However, from 1887 to the present, our official statements regarding the nature of her inspiration deny inerrancy and I fully agree with my brethren on that matter. As an inspired leader she has and does teach the flock, but never are her writings to be made the sole basis of doctrine. This she affirmed repeatedly, and I gladly concur.

On the other matter, neither I nor my wife have any relationship with critics of this church, which would be disloyalty to the body of Christ. Despite accusations, we have never been a channel of "in house" matters to such. We are well aware that much GC committee material is "leaked" to the outside, but it has not been through us. The limit of my sharing of information with any "outside" has been the statement that the task on which I was working was not a novel one, but one engaged upon by other men well known to us such as W. W. Prescott and L. E. Froom. In view of the materials circulated by Walter Rea on Prescott and certain nontraditional presentations to be found in Froom — such information was hardly top-secret.

With warmest of regards,
Sincerely your brother,
Desmond Ford

The Final Decision

September 19, 1980

Dear Des, It is with heavy heart that I write this letter in order to convey to you the action of the Australasian Division Executive Committee. Your brethren here in this part of the world remember with affection and appreciation their fellowship with you

and your service to the church over many years. However, your stated doctrinal position has created a divergence of views between you and the church.

As you are aware, the Sanctuary Review Committee studied your proposals in detail and their findings along with the PREXAD recommendations have been conveyed to you. Pastors Wilson and Parmenter and others have talked with you at length concerning your position which it seems remains unchanged. These matters were reported to the committee yesterday and the following action voted:

"WHEREAS: Doctor Desmond Ford publicly challenged basic doctrines of the church and was subsequently given six months leave of absence to enable him to provide a documented statement of his beliefs, and this statement, having been studied by the Sanctuary Review Committee (a group of more than one hundred scholars and administrators appointed by the General Conference committee), was found unacceptable on the sanctuary, the investigative judgement and the role of Ellen White, and

"WHEREAS: Doctor Ford admits that his belief is no longer in accord with some of the accepted teachings of the church and that he therefore could not preach or support them, and at best could only keep silent on matters which the church sees as distinctive doctrine; and in spite of urging from church administrators, theologians, ministers and friends, he is unable to accept the counsel of his brethren to reconsider his position, and

"WHEREAS: The General Conference, through the Presidents' Executive Administrative Committee has counselled that the Australasian Division should relieve Doctor Ford of his responsibilities as a minister and teacher and withdraw his credentials, it was

"VOTED: That with deep regret we withdraw Doctor Desmond Ford's ministerial credentials, noting that this does not annul his ordination, and

"FURTHER: To recommend to the Avondale College Board that he be relieved of his responsibilities as a minister and teacher."

It is our prayer Des that God will be with you and Jill, and it is our sincere hope that the day will come when you will once again be able to espouse wholly and conscientiously the full doctrinal position of the church.

With Christian greetings,
Yours sincerely,
R. W. Taylor
Secretary

P.S. Our Treasurer, Brother W. T. Andrews, will be contacting you concerning financial and policy matters.